

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 01205 250518Z

17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

OMB-01 SAM-01 DPW-01 /067 W
----- 030808

R 250437Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5130

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 1205

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, LA

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIANS INDICATE SOTH VISIT NOT SUITABLE
IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH

1. DFA (EVANS, INDO-CHINA SECTION) CALLED EMBOFF FEB 25 AND INFORMED HIM THAT AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED FEB 24 TO INFORM LAOTIAN FONMIN HPOUMI VONGVICHIT AND MIN OF ECONOMY SOTH PHETRASY THAT VISIT TO AUSTRALIA BY SOTH IN FEBRUARY OR IN MARCH WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE CONVENTIENT TO AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR ALSO INSTRUCTED TO HAND OVER LETTER FROM FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE TO PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA ON SHARMAN CASE.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY EMBOFF EVANS AGREED THAT THE ABOVE TWO ACTIONS (SOTH VISIT POSTPONEMENT AND WILLESEE LETTER) WERE TO BE KEPT SEPARATE. HOWEVER, HE ALSO AGREED THAT LOATIANS WOULD PROBABLY APPRECIATE THAT THEY WERE, IN FACT, CLOSELY RELATED.

3. IN DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENT MISS JOY HOOPER OF SYDNEY, DESCRIBED AS GIRL FRIEND OF NEIL SHARMAN, RETURNED TO AUSTRALIA FROM LAOS ON FEB 24 AND REVIEWED DEAN/SHARMAN CASE WITH SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, WHICH CARRIED ARTICLE
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ON SUBJECT ON FRONT PAGE FEB 25. MISS HOOPER REFERRED TO

HER BRIEFING ON STATUS OF DEAN AND SHARMAN BY EMBASSY
VIENTIANE AND SAID THAT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WAS LEAVING
ALL THE HARD INVESTIGATION INTO DISAPPEARANCE OF TWO MEN
TO THE U.S. EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE. SHE SAID SHE WOULD ASK
PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM AND FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESS TO
POSTPONE VISIT OF SOTH PHETRASY TO AUSTRALIA UNTIL THE
MYSTERY OF SHARMAN'S DISAPPEARANCE IS SOLVED.
HARROP

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, DETENTION, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CANBER01205
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: UPGRADED PER MEMO P880098-2048
Executive Order: R1 19940824 HARTUNG, KENNETH A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P880098-2081, D750065-0838
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750216/aaaaanyp.tel
Line Count: 69
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <03 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRALIANS INDICATE SOTH VISIT NOT SUITABLE IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH
TAGS: MOPS, LA, AS, (SOTH PHETRASY), (DEAN, CHARLES), (SHARMAN)
To: STATE VIENTIANE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006